



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Groundwater Monitoring Tops Advisory Board Survey of Public Concerns

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) is a group of citizen volunteers who monitor the environmental cleanup activities on the Oak Ridge Reservation by the Oak Ridge Office of the Department of Energy (DOE). Annually ORSSAB conducts a survey of many persons who live in communities adjacent to the reservation concerning the environmental contamination cleanup activities that are being or will need to be addressed by the DOE Environmental Management (EM) program. The board's Stakeholder Survey is mailed to roughly 800 area residents and distributed at various locations each year in an effort to determine what issues are topmost on citizens' minds.

In the most recent survey just over half of respondents said their top environmental cleanup priority was monitoring contaminated groundwater and reduction of contamination leaving DOE property via groundwater. Coming in second in the survey ratings was the closely associated issue of long-term care (stewardship) of contaminated areas.

In third place, noted by 26 percent of respondents, were Integrated Facility Disposition Program projects at Y-12 and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, followed by economic development at East Tennessee Technology Park, which was selected by 22 percent. The Integrated Facility Disposition Program is a long-term endeavor over about 20 years to eliminate more than 400 surplus facilities at Y-12 and the lab.

Other topics receiving 14-15 percent of votes were education about the history of the reservation and contamination left on site; cleaning up the burial grounds in Bear Creek Valley; and transportation of waste on public roads.

While historic preservation issues have received much attention the last couple of years, only 13 percent of respondents thought it was a top issue.

The information is used in two ways by the board. The issues and concerns identified in the surveys are discussed at the board's annual retreat to assist in planning its work for the next fiscal year (October – September). The board also uses the information when working on recommendations to the EM program on the work priorities it would like for DOE to consider for submittal in the annual budget request to DOE headquarters and ultimately to congress.

All items on the survey were discussed at this year's ORSSAB retreat, held August 29, and those with the highest scores were incorporated into the work plans for the various ORSSAB committees. The board's DOE liaisons will work with the committees throughout the year to update board members on the status of those topics.

The majority of surveys are mailed in August, in advance of the board's annual planning retreat, but the survey can be completed online at any time on the board's website at www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab.

ORSSAB is a federally chartered advisory board composed of 20 individuals representing five counties who monitor DOE's work and provide advice and recommendations on a variety of cleanup issues. The board provides input on environmental cleanup selections, waste management, and stewardship of remediated areas where contamination will remain in place. Stewardship includes monitoring the effectiveness of remediation methods and the long-term controls to ensure the area is protected. The board was chartered in 1995.

ORSSAB meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the DOE Information Center, 475 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, Tenn. The meetings are open to the public and an open comment period is provided.

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